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Contact: Amy Louviere

Phone: 202-693-9423

Email: louviere.amy@dol.gov

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MSHA announces results of September impact inspections

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration today announced that federal inspectors issued 130 citations and 13 orders during special impact inspections conducted at nine coal mines and one metal/nonmetal mine last month.

The monthly inspections, which began in force in April 2010 following the explosion at the Upper Big Branch Mine, involve mines that merit increased agency attention and enforcement due to their poor compliance history or particular compliance concerns. These matters include: high numbers of violations or closure orders; frequent hazard complaints or hotline calls; plan compliance issues; inadequate workplace examinations; a high number of accidents, injuries or illnesses; fatalities; adverse conditions, such as increased methane liberation, faulty roof conditions, inadequate ventilation and accumulations of respirable dust.

On Sept. 17, an impact inspection was conducted during the evening shift at Red River Coal Co.’s No. 1 Prep Plant in Wise County, Va. The mine phone and radio communications systems were monitored to prevent the possibility of advance notification to mine personnel. MSHA personnel inspected the preparation plant and loadout facility and issued 25 104(a) citations and 13 104(d)(2) orders. This is the first impact inspection of this mine.

Inspectors cited the operator for failure to conduct adequate on-shift examinations and to record, report and correct hazardous conditions. Inadequate examinations allowed existing hazards to continue, thereby exposing miners to potentially serious accidents. MSHA inspectors cited numerous hazardous conditions that should have been identified, recorded and corrected. The violations pointed to management’s inattention to safety precautions and lack of maintenance at the preparation plant and loadout facility.

The area within 25 feet of a utility pole and the area surrounding a 200-gallon bulk diesel storage tank in the raw coal dump area were not kept free of combustible materials, posing a fire risk. Fire extinguishers in the raw coal dump were not examined within the last six months. Guarding on a conveyor was not secured and exposed personnel to moving machine parts that could result in serious bodily injury, amputations or death.

Inspectors found a metal walkway with holes through which a miner could fall into coal stockpile below. The escapeway for the clean coal tunnel was not maintained. A 72-inch section of the escapeway bottom and a 43-inch section on the escapeway floor were rusted through with sharp edges. These conditions created slips, trips and falls hazards. Refuse materials and washed coal were allowed to accumulate up to 3 inches deep and 14 feet wide along the entire width of the walkway behind the transfer belt.

The risk of fire and coal dust explosions caused great concern at the loadout facility. Inspectors found thick coatings of coal dust accumulated all around the inside of the loadout tunnel escapeway and the ventilation pipe connecting the escapeway and the loadout tunnel. The top clean coal loadout reclaim tunnel had coal accumulations up to 3 inches deep underneath and along the backside of the belt and 1 inch deep around the tail drive roller guards and on the belt structure.

Since April 2010, MSHA has conducted 666 impact inspections and issued 11,133 citations, 1,031 orders and 46 safeguards.

Editor’s Note: MSHA’s Monthly Impact Inspection List for September 2013 has been attached to this email.

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U.S. Department of Labor news materials are accessible at <http://www.dol.gov>. The information above is available in large print, Braille or CD from the COAST office upon request by calling 202-693-7828 or TTY 202-693-7755.

MSHA Monthly Impact Inspection List
(September 2013)

September 2013						Coal																												
Mine Information						Type of Issuance				S&S Information				Issuances - Type of Action												Justifications								
District	State	Mine ID	Controller Name	Operator Name	Mine Name	Cit	Orders	Safe -guards (Coal only)	Total	S&S	Non- S&S	Total	S&S Rate	104(a)	104(b)	104(d)(1) Citation	104(d)(1) Order	104(d)(2)	104(e)(2) Order	314(b)	103(k)	104(g)(1)	103(j)	107(a)	Total	1. Operator Tactics	2. Hazard Complaints /Hotline Calls	3. Plan Compliance Issues	4. Inadequate Exams	5. Accidents, Injuries, Illnesses	6. Fatal Accidents	7. Enforcement History	8. Adverse Conditions	9. Respirable Dust Issues
District 03	WV	4601437	CONSOL Energy Inc	McElroy Coal Company	McElroy Mine	24	0	0	24	7	17	24	29.17%	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	1								
District 04	WV	4609054	Alpha Natural Resources, Inc.	Elk Run Coal Co	Republic Energy	15	0	0	15	6	9	15	40.00%	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15									
District 05	VA	4406199	William D Humphreys	Red River Coal Company Inc	No 1 Prep Plant	25	13	0	38	25	13	38	65.79%	25	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	38		1				1			
District 06	KY	1518943	Jerry Skeens; Eddie Skeens	Falcon Coal Corporation	Mine No 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1							
District 07	TN	4003365	Quintana Energy Partners LP	Kopper Glo Mining, LLC	Double Mountain Mine	3	0	0	3	1	2	3	33.33%	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3			1	1			1		
District 08	IN	1202249	Donald Blankenberger	Five Star Mining Inc	Prosperity Mine	2	0	0	2	1	1	2	50.00%	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2			1						
District 09	CO	0503836	Peabody Energy	Peabody Twentymile Mining LLC	Foidel Creek Mine	8	0	0	8	0	8	8	0.00%	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8			1	1					
District 10	KY	1502709	Patriot Coal Corporation	Highland Mining Company LLC	Highland 9 Mine	16	0	0	16	9	7	16	56.25%	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16								1		
District 12	WV	4608973	James C Justice II	Kentucky Fuel Corporation	WV-3 Surface Mine	14	0	0	14	11	3	14	78.57%	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14								1		
9					National Totals	107	13	0	120	60	60	120	50.00%	107	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	120	1	2	3	2	2	0	5	1	0

September 2013Metal Nonmetal																																		
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District	State	Mine ID	Controller Name	Operator Name	Mine Name	Cit	Orders	Safe -guards (Coal only)	Total	S&S	Non- S&S	Total	S&S Rate	104(a)	104(b)	104(d)(1) Citation	104(d)(1) Order	104(d)(2)	104(e)(2) Order	314(b)	103(k)	104(g)(1)	103(j)	107(a)	Total	1. Operator Tactics	2. Hazard Complaints /Hotline Calls	3. Plan Compliance Issues	4. Inadequate Exams	5. Accidents, Injuries, Illnesses	6. Fatal Accidents	7. Enforcement History	8. Adverse Conditions	9. Respirable Dust Issues
NE	MA	1900076	S M Lorusso & Sons Inc	S M Lorusso & Sons Inc	West Roxbury Crushed Stone	23	0	0	23	10	13	23	43.48%	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	1				1				
1						23	0	0	23	10	13	23	43.48%	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
National Totals																																		
Total						130	13	0	143	70	73	143	48.95%	130	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	143	2	2	3	3	2	0	6	1	0
National Totals																																		